



GREENSBORO URBAN AREA METROPOLITAN PLANNING ORGANIZATION

TECHNICAL COORDINATING COMMITTEE

Minutes of January 22, 2004

1:00 p.m. Greensboro, NC

Blue Room

(County Commissioners' Briefing Room)

Old Guilford County Courthouse

ATTENDANCE

Jim Westmoreland	TCC Chair	Alec MacIntosh	Greensboro Planning Dept.
Tyler Meyer	GDOT/MPO	Heidi Galanti	Greensboro Planning Dept.
Jeff Sovich	GDOT/MPO	Bill Ruska	Greensboro Planning Dept.
Craig McKinney	GDOT/MPO	Mark Kirstner	Guilford County Planning Dept.
Peggy Holland	GDOT/MPO	Mike Cowan	NCDOT, Division 7
Kimberly Hinton	NCDOT - SWP	John Button	NCDOT, Triad Regional Office
Scott Rhine	PART		

Jim Westmoreland called the meeting to order at 1:08 p.m.

Action Items

1. Approve Minutes of November 19, 2003

Mark Kirstner moved for approval of the minutes. Kimberly Hinton seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the minutes as prepared.

2. Approval of Provisional Congestion Management System

Jeff Sovich advised that the Greensboro MPO was designated as a Transportation Management Area on July 8, 2002. As a TMA, Greensboro is required to develop and implement a Congestion Management System within 18 months of designation. A CMS is a coordinated package of planning, programming, and operational strategies aimed at improving the safety, reliability, and efficiency of the transportation system. Guidance from the Federal Highway Administration North Carolina Division specifies that a new TMA may demonstrate satisfactory progress toward implementation of a CMS by submitting a detailed CMS outline no later than January 8, 2004. The MPO may adopt the detailed CMS outline as its provisional CMS at its first scheduled meeting of 2004, provided that a fully functional CMS is

adopted at the time of the MPO's next scheduled update of its long range transportation plan. MPO staff have prepared and submitted a Detailed CMS Outline by January 8, which was accepted by the FHWA NC Division. A full CMS is currently under development by staff and the consultant team and is on pace to be completed and adopted concurrently with the 2030 LRTP around June or July. The adoption will include the required public involvement component. The resolution presented today approves the Detailed CMS Outline as the MPO's provisional CMS. The recommended action is approval of the resolution as presented.

Scott Rhine moved to approve the resolution as presented; Mike Cowan seconded the motion. The Committee voted unanimously to approve the resolution adopting the Detailed CMS Outline.

Business / Potential Action Items

1. 2006 – 2012 TIP Development Update

Jeff Sovich advised that the development timeline for the 2006 – 2012 Transportation Improvement Program has been shifted back slightly, compared with previous TIP cycles, partially due to the fact that Congress has not yet approved a transportation appropriations bill for fiscal year 2004. The result is that the priority needs process, which is currently under way, will continue through at least February, followed by the TIP negotiation meeting with NCDOT, around the end of March, rather than the usual January timeframe. The draft TIP project listings by MPO will be released by NCDOT around September of 2004, followed by the draft TIP Division 7 public hearing in October. The MPO will have a negotiation session on the draft TIP with NCDOT in around January, 2005. From February through July 2005, NCDENR will conduct the air quality conformity analysis. There will be a public review and comment period on the draft MTIP in mid-2005, followed by adoption by the TAC in late summer 2005. The 2006 –2012 MTIP will become effective on October 1, 2005.

The MPO is currently in the early stages of the two year TIP development cycle. As part of this process, a public meeting on transportation needs in the Greensboro area was held on January 13. The meeting consisted of an informal drop-in session, followed by an informational presentation, and concluded with a question and comment session. A summary of the comments and suggestions received during the meeting is included in the materials provided for today's meeting. The public comment period ends tomorrow, Friday, January 23. At that time, staff will compile and review all comments received. These comments will feed into the priority needs process of the MTIP and the future transportation needs inventory of the LRTP. Staff and the TCC will continue to refine the draft priority needs list and future study needs, and will present these for more detailed discussion and proposed adoption in February. Staff will provide further updates on the TIP development process at upcoming meetings.

2. LRTP Development Update

Tyler Meyer advised that recent public involvement activities related to the Long Range Transportation Plan have been extensive. These activities have included a meeting of community influencers, a telephone survey of residents of the MPO area outside the City of Greensboro, which complemented a similar survey of City residents, which was conducted earlier in 2003. In November, a series of 4 public workshops was held; one in downtown Greensboro, one in the northwestern part of Guilford County, one on the eastern part of the County and one in the southern part of the County. Staff will soon prepare a summary of the public input received to date. A series of interviews of key community leaders has also been conducted.

Staff have also conducted substantial analysis of existing conditions, expected future conditions, and the implications for transportation options likely to be available for consideration in the future. The LRTP development process is approximately at its mid-point. A second round of public involvement is about to begin, and completion and TAC approval of the plan is anticipated around mid-year. Consequently, the current stage in this process is pivotal.

The LRTP development process has been devised to include public involvement activities at every stage, with the intent of engaging the public in a dialogue regarding their transportation needs and preferences. The public involvement activities have been grouped into three rounds, each with a different focus. The goals of the first round have been to provide information, to stimulate discussion, and to elicit feedback on various transportation topics. Over 170 individuals participated in the first round of public meetings, 50 of whom completed the questionnaire that was distributed. Over 1,200 City and County residents responded to the two telephone surveys, which constitute statistically valid random samples of both populations. The mayors of the 5 towns in the study area have been interviewed. Mayor Holliday and Board of County Commissioners Chairman Landreth will also be interviewed.

To date, input from the public meetings, and telephone surveys has been compiled, analyzed, and summarized. Responses that were most frequently expressed among all the sources of input include: support for enhancements to the efficiency and effectiveness of local public transportation; a perceived need for enhanced regional public transportation services or infrastructure; and an emphasis on expanding the network of pedestrian and bicycle facilities and improving the connectivity of these facilities. Other notable responses include: a desire for construction of selected additional highway facilities; a desire for a modern traffic signal system; and a perceived need to more effectively control travel speeds on some facilities. Complete summaries of all the input received are available on the web site for the LRTP: www.greensboro-nc.gov/lrtp.

Upcoming public involvement activities will include the second round of four public workshops, completion of the interviews of public officials, and a second newsletter on the status of the LRTP project. The public workshops will be held on February 16, 18, 19, and 23. The times and locations of these meetings is also available on the LRTP web site.

The LRTP investment strategy will be developed by preparing a range of scenarios for the future transportation system, based on several general investment strategies. These scenarios will be presented to the public for consideration during the second round of public workshops. One scenario will consist of the existing plus committed projects, as a baseline scenario. Another scenario will focus heavily on future roadway capacity improvements. A third scenario will be strongly oriented toward enhancements to alternative modes of travel, such as pedestrian, bicycle, public transportation, and regional transit improvements. These scenarios will be used to gauge the preferences and priorities of the public for how the future transportation system should operate and how transportation funding should be allocated. Public reaction to these scenarios will be used by the project team and the Technical Committee in developing the actual project lists and horizon-year networks for the final LRTP.

Completion of the 2030 LRTP is scheduled for Summer 2004. At the second round of public workshops, staff and the consultant team will provide an overview of the public input received to date, a summary of the results of analysis work and its implications for likely future transportation conditions. Attendees will then have an opportunity to make comments and suggestions on the recommended

investment strategy and core set of projects for the plan. Staff will present additional information, including preliminary results from the second round of public workshops, during the TCC's February meeting.

3. MPO Strategic Reports

Tyler Meyer advised that the reauthorization of TEA-21 by Congress was not completed at the time of its expiration, so a six month extension was enacted. That extension is due to expire at the end of January. Congress is working to finalize the surface transportation reauthorization, but the current status suggests that another interim extension, possibly twelve months in length, is likely. Such an extension would allow continuing deliberations and exploration of enhanced revenue options. There is a possibility that reauthorization will not be completed until after the November elections, because raising the gasoline tax, which is seen as the most viable means of generating the needed revenue, is likely to be unpopular with voters.

In a previous meeting, it was mentioned that a meeting of local public officials regarding the US 421 interchanges project would be scheduled sometime in January. That meeting has not yet been scheduled, but will probably occur sometime in early Spring, and will be followed shortly by the official public hearing for the project.

Regarding the High Point Road widening and relocation project, significant public comments were received during the public involvement process conducted late last year. NCDOT has scheduled a post-hearing consultation meeting with agency stakeholders to determine the significance of those comments and the likely impacts to the project, and what the next steps will be. Staff will continue to update the committee as further developments unfold.

Other Items

1. TCC Member Report

Mike Cowan advised that the Southern Urban Loop is now finished and ready except for the interchange off ramps at US 220. NCDOT has decided that the best course of action will be to delay opening the facility until all the ramps are completed. This final construction work will require approximately six weeks to complete. This will have the Southern Urban Loop open well in advance of the National Home Furnishings Market in April, which will benefit greatly from the availability of this alternate route.

Initial construction work on the Western Urban Loop, in the vicinity of Bryan Boulevard, has begun. This is the most densely populated area, through which construction for the loop has passed, so far. Much more restrictive standards for noise, glare, and other construction impacts have been implemented for this segment. However, there will inevitably be complaints and concerns raised by nearby residents.

Completion of the I-40 widening project is likely to be delayed until Spring. At present the contractor is incurring a penalty for each day construction continues past the contract due date.

Scott Rhine advised that the Southern Environmental Law Center has announced that it intends to file a lawsuit challenging the Early Action Compact process. The EAC process would allow the effective date of the Triad's 1-hour ozone non-attainment designation to be deferred until 2007. However, if

successful, the SELC lawsuit could invalidate the EAC process and thereby abruptly throw the Triad into non-attainment status. The Triad EAC partners will continue to monitor this situation and keep the committee informed of further developments.

The TCC adjourned at 2:44 p.m.